Janko Tipsarevic of Serbia celebrates after beating Britain's Andy Murray during their Dubai Open second round match on Wednesday. Tipsarevic won the match 7-6, 4-6, 6-4.

#### **DUBAI OPEN**

## More stars sink



AFP, Dubai

The cull of leading players at the Dubai Open continued in spectacular fashion as Australian Open finalist Andy Murray, Nikolay Davydenko, and Jo-Wilfried Tsonga all fell in the second round on Wednesday.

With Roger Federer having announced his withdrawal on Sunday, and Gilles Simon being beaten in the first round, it means that only three of the eight seeds have made it through to the quarter-finals of the two million dollar ATP event.

Even for a trio to survive it required Novak Djokovic, the new favourite in Australian Open champion Federer's absence, to recover from a set and 2-3 down against his Serbian compatriot, Viktor Troicki, eventually winning 3-6, 6-

Djokovic attributed his difficulties to the speed of the ball through the air, and his recovery partly to the lowering sun and spreading shade which he reckoned made ball control less difficult.

Davydenko, the ATP World Tour champion, had a damaged wrist, causing his retirement after losing the first set 6-3 to Michael Berrer, Tsonga has been unwell, and Murray suggested that trying new

**ACA** stays

upbeat

CRICINFO, undated

The Australian Cricketers

Association remains hopeful

that its IPL security require-

ments can be met despite Lalit

Modi's blunt criticism of play-

ers' concerns this week. The

ACA chief executive, Paul

Marsh, said there were positive

signs that the IPL's security firm

was taking seriously the list of

safety issues that worried play-

ers after an independent report

found that a terrorist threat

against the league was credible.

Dickason has been working with

the IPL's security adviser,

Nicholls-Steyn," Marsh told

Cricinfo. "They've been working

for a few days now on what we've

identified as the issues that have

come out of various player

but that has so far proved little

It would be a major boon for

the MCC, and chief executive

Keith Bradshaw travelled

alongside Anthony Wreford, a

trustee of the club, to India for a

weekend of talks with consor-

tium members and IPL offi-

cials. Discussions also

included the ongoing partner-

ship with the IPL to promote the MCC Spirit of Cricket cam-

respectful of the game's tradi-

tions and always mindful of its

role as guardian of the laws and

spirit of cricket," said

Bradshaw. "We would not

pursue a path that we believed

was contrary to the best inter-

ests of the sport or to the future

changing. MCC, as an innova-

tive, independent cricket club,

wants to be at the heart of that

change. Playing cricket is

something that we have quite a

bit of experience in - we com-

pete in over 450 matches every

year around the world and

currently have a men's team in

the UAE and a women's team

involvement in the IPL is some-

thing I believe is worthy of thor-

ough investigation, and some-

thing that we'll take to our com-

mittee for their deliberation."

"The concept of MCC

in Trinidad & Tobago.

"Undeniably, the game is

health of Test match cricket.

"MCC has a proud history, is

paign in the tournament.

MCC bids

more than speculation.

meetings.

**FROM PAGE 17** 

"Our security adviser Reg

tactical combinations had contributed to his exit.

The world number three from Britain was beaten by yet another Serbian, Janko Tipsarevic, whose thrillingly unpredictable 7-6 (7/3), 4-6, 6-4, success followed a dramatic see-saw path and had a great finish.

Tipsarevic, who had also been sick when he arrived in the Gulf, won the first set on a Hawkeye decision after the umpire had over-ruled a line judge's call and had been proved wrong by the com-

Murray then struggled laboriously back to a set all, only to concede the hardwon initiative immediately, playing a bad service game and going 0-3 down in the final set.

Tipsarevic was saved five break points to hold on to that advantage even though he got a time violation warning for taking too long to serve. But he could not close the match out at 5-3, and the match had further twists and turns.

Both men made amazing retrieves as the rallies fluctuated constantly between attack and counter-attack, and the match changed direction twice after Murray saved a match point at 5-4, 40-30.

He went on to break back, but still could not reach 5-5 on his serve, Tipsarevic snatching the match with a brilliant change-of-direction backhand

hard cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Zimbabwe may be underdogs

for the upcoming limited-overs

series against West Indies, but

batsman Tatenda Taibu has said

the team will be aiming to "play

playing hard cricket again," he

said. "We really want to stamp

our authority now and start

2006 that they were temporarily

withdrawing from Tests, having

last played India at home in

September 2005. They continue

to play ODIs and Twenty20s but

languish at the bottom of the

tour with a warm-up game

against a WICB Vice

Chancellor's XI but will be

without wicketkeeper Brendan

Taylor, who did not arrive with

the squad because his transit

visa for London was misplaced.

"He should be able to travel 48

hours later and join up with us

on Thursday night," coach

However, Taibu said this

Walter Chawaguta said.

Zimbabwe will begin their

Zimbabwe announced in

performing as expected."

world rankings.

"We really want to start

hard cricket" and wingames.

down the line which opened up the court for a successful net attack.

"I don't want to sound like a hero, but did think of not playing the tournament,' said Tipsarevic.

"But today I was feeling good.

"A lot of times I lose because I don't use the chances I have. It's like not interesting enough to finish the score 6-3! Luckily at 5-4 he didn't make too many first serves."

"It's not the end of the world," said Murray, quelling a suggestion that he might be frustrated at the loss and suggesting he had been trying more serve and volleys and net attacks than usual.

"If it had been a Slam, my tactics and game style would have been a bit different."

Tsonga, by contrast, may have had doubts about playing whilst feeling sick, though withdrawing after being given a wild card by the tournament would not have been an easy decision.

The fifth-seeded Frenchman lost 7-5 6-3 to Ivan Ljubicic, the former world number three, who was in assertive mood with a big serve which was once the most successful on the tour. Ljubicic was also typically generous with his comments.

"It was definitely the best I have played for a while," the world number 26 from Croatia said.

"Sometimes when you are serving you feel half a metre taller and I was like that today. But Jo was not feeling at his best."

# Gayle leaves for mother

AFP, Port of Spain

West Indies captain Chris Gayle has been granted "compassionate" leave to be with his sick mother and has not been dropped from the squad, West Indies Cricket Board chief executive Ernest Hilaire saidWednesday.

Gayle was not included in a 13-member squad announced for this Sunday's Twenty20 international against Zimbabwe at Queen's Park Oval, but is "expected to be available" for the five oneday internationals against the Zimbabweans that follow.

"Chris Gayle went to Australia, and while there, his mother was ill, and he had to come back," said Hilaire.

"We thought, in discussion with him, that he should probably go home for a few days to see his mother, to be with her, then join the team in Guyana."

In Gayle's absence, wicketkeeper-batsman Denesh Ramdin, Gayle's vicecaptain for the just concluded limited-overs series against Australia, has been named captain.

"The players have left Australia, and those on the Twenty20 team are going straight to Trinidad," Hilaire

"I am fully supportive of Chris getting a few days off to go and see his family, be with his mother, then join the team. There is no change to the captaincy of the West Indies team as such."

#### Aussie-NZ

**FROM PAGE 17** last year but only because Ricky Ponting was being

New Zealand have named a 12-man squad, which makes their selections relatively easy. Shane Bond is back in the group having missed the Bangladesh series and Tim Southee is the most likely to make way for Bond. The opener Peter Ingram made a promising start to his international career against Bangladesh but will face a tougher challenge against a

fiercely quick Australian new-

ball attack. Dirk Nannes was rested from the final Twenty20 against West Indies but expect him to return to form a very fast opening combination with Shaun Tait. Ryan Harris could be squeezed out despite making a good debut on Tuesday, or the selectors might decide to give Mitchell Johnson a rest. Daniel Christian also picked up two wickets on debut and although both were caught in the deep, he may hold on to his spot at No. 7. Michael Hussey replace Shaun Marsh in the squad but is unlikely to be in Australia's strongest XI, given that he was overlooked for the three Twenty 20s at home.

#### **TEAMS**

AUSTRALIA (possible): Shane Watson, David Warner, Michael Clarke (captain), David Hussey, Cameron White, Brad Haddin (wk), Daniel Christian, Steven Smith, Mitchell Johnson, Dirk

Nannes, Shaun Tait. NEW ZEALAND (possible): Brendon McCullum (wk), Peter Ingram, Martin Guptill, Ross Taylor, Jacob Oram, Gareth Hopkins, James Franklin, Daniel Vettori (captain), Nathan McCullum, Shane Bond, Daryl Tuffey.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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## WI get Shiv boost

Cricket

AFP, Port of Spain

Shivnarine Chanderpaul is one of four players who will return to the West Indies' line-up for Sunday's Twenty20 International against Zimbabwe at Queen's Park Oval.

The evergreen left-hander is back from an injury lay-off that allowed him to nurse the fractured thumb he sustained in a Test against Australia last December.

"I am feeling okay," he told the Trinidad Express newspaper. "(The thumb) just needs to be tested at the higher level to see where we are." Chanderpaul and the other returning players

have boosted the West Indies line-up that was severely depleted for the recent limited-overs series in Australia. Left-arm spinner Sulieman Benn has rehabilitated the left knee he wrecked in the recent Tests

while opener Adrian Barath's hamstring has healed, and left-handed batsman Darren Bravo, Dwayne Bravo's younger brother, has recovered from a shoulder injury. Chanderpaul immediately got down to business, leading his native Guyana to their first

victory in the West Indies first-class championship in the last three seasons with a five-wicket triumph over Leewards Islands on Monday at the National Cricket Centre here. He made 105 not out in the first innings and

32 not out in the second. He clocked eight hours, seven minutes in the middle -- not the most ideal preparation for the frenetic pace of the limited-

overs formats -- but appropriate for someone returning from a thumb injury.

"As a batsman, it is always good to get some runs behind you, especially going into an international tournament," said Chanderpaul.

"It helps with your confidence. It helps to build you up, and if you are going into the Oneday International and Twenty20 International

formats, you need to have runs behind you. Chanderpaul's return follows the side's horrific trip to Australia, where no less than seven seasoned players -- including himself --

were missing through injury. As a result, a series of five one-day internationals and two Twenty20 Internationals was a "no-contest", and Australia convincingly swept both series.

"It is pretty tough out there," said Chanderpaul. "It is never easy against Australia. "They are on a high. They have been playing

good cricket, and even Pakistan went down there and struggled to win a match. "It is never easy there, but you still have to give

the guys support, and make sure when we come home, we put that behind us as quickly as possible because we have tournaments in front of us. "We need to move forward, and we need to look ahead at these matches here. Zimbabwe is

here. We have to try and get some wins from Zimbabwe, and gain some confidence going into the Twenty20 World Cup (to be hosted in the Caribbean from April 30 to May 16)." Sunday's T20I is the first between the two sides

since the format gained international status six years ago, and West Indies have never lost a bilateral ODI series against these opponents.

### Respect comes first they played Down Under.

### Cricket

AFP, St John's

New West Indies coach Ottis Gibson has set earning the respect of his players as a major goal during their brief series against Zimbabwe.

Gibson was speaking at an official unveiling in the island of St. Lucia, where the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) president Julian Hunte has an office.

"I need to explain to them what they can expect from me first of all, and what I expect from them as the players," said Gibson. "We need to have that contact time. They

need to know they can trust me, but I also need to know I can trust them because it is a two-way street." Gibson shocked the cricket World last

month, when he gave up a comfortable job as England bowling coach to become the new coach of the beleaguered West Indies side that has flagged internationally for the last 15 years. The last few weeks would have given the

reality check about the enormity of the challenge that faces him. West Indies return to the Caribbean on

Internationals or two Twenty20 Internationals

former Barbados and West Indies fast bowler a

Thursday from a horrific trip to Australia, where they failed to win any of the five One-day

"The players will be low in confidence based

on what happened recently in Australia," said "We have a game on Sunday in Trinidad, and

the players get back on Thursday, so we literally

have two days to get together as a group, for me to meet the team, and have some contact time with them.' As bowling coach of England, Gibson is fully aware of how jarring criticism can be, but he

was philosophical about handling the pressure that would come if he cannot halt the terminal decline of one of World cricket's brightest brands. "I don't know if you can ever be mentally

prepared for criticism," he said. "I know it is going to come. "It is going to be a lot of work to start winning

again. A lot of work goes into actually winning anything. I am committed to that work, and if we get the preparation right, there is no reason why we can't start winning again." West Indies face Zimbabwe in a single

Twenty20 International this coming Sunday at Queen's Park Oval in the Trinidad & Tobago capital. They then tackle the Zimbabweans in five

ODIs which will be followed by the Twenty20 World Cup in the Caribbean, starting in April, and then three Tests and five ODIs against South Africa, starting in May.



Grameenphone's head of communications Aman Ashraf (2nd from L) addresses a press conference organised in connection with the 24th Bangladesh ITF Junior Tennis at the National Tennis Complex in Ramna yesterday.

### Mashrafe flat on return

**FROM PAGE 17** 

will try to give my hundred per

Mashrafe was not bothered at all about the speed or the lack thereof during the game.

"I did not bowl at a great speed. But that does not bother me. Most important thing is I bowled a good line and length which is what matters in oneday cricket. I think I bowled at 122-125ks today [Wednesday]. I am expecting to generate 10 more kilometres in the future."

Most importantly however, the mainstay of the Bangladesh bowling did not seem to be in any trouble.

"I have bowled a six-over spell today. I could have bowled eight on the trot if that was needed. I did not feel any pain on the follow-through."

The man who has been an integral part of the Bangladesh side for the best part of the last

team's chances against mighty England.

team had a good mixture of

youth and experience in the 15-

man squad and would perform

well. He said Stuart

Matsikenyeri and captain and

offspinner Prosper Utseya, who

have played 105 and 101 ODIs

respectively, would be key to

Utseyal played a lot of games,"

Taibu said. "They've got a lot of

maturity at the moment. So we're

looking to play a lot of good

cricket. I've been here before, so

it's great to play cricket here again.

guys have said there is a lot of

talent in Zimbabwe, but we

really have to put it to show now.

It's not (just) about the talent,

we really have to join the two

(talent and maturity) and play

Indies in a Twenty20 in Port of

Spain on Sunday and Taibu said

the format wasn't only about

explosive cricket. "It's about

mental cricket, reacting to situa-

tions. It will be exciting.

Twenty20 will be exciting for the

crowd. I'm sure they're going to

come for some good cricket."

Zimbabwe take on West

"There are a lot of times the

"They've [Matsikenyeri and

their fortunes.

good cricket."

"It's hard to predict what the result might be. But I'm confident we will do better against them than in the two previous series. Tamim, Imrul at the top order are batting well so are Shakib, Mushfigur and Riyad down the order. If one or two players in the middle order can score big, we can put them (England) under pressure."

The experienced campaigner who was handed the captaincy in the middle of last year only to relinquish it to Shaqib Al Hasan a few days into his first assignment expressed his pleasure at the status quo.

"Shakib is doing a wonderful job. I think he should continue his job as captain. If I want the captaincy back, that would have put extra pressure

on the whole team." Mashrafe also backed his decade also spoke about his long-term teammate and out-

Immortal Taibu promises

Don Bradman, saying the Mumbai man was the "greatest

batsmanthegame has ever seen.' Newspapers highlighted Australian spin legend Shane Warne's tweets as he followed the knock of one of his close friends.

"Nervous for my good friend Sachin," Warne posted as Tendulkar neared his double

"Come on Sachin, my friend, get your 200. World record to please!You deserve it."

Once achieved, Warne said: 'Yes, yes, yes! Well done Sachin my friend. Congrats and well done! Awesome.'

The Hindustan Times cricket correspondent wrote: "It's never a good idea to try and speak for a whole nation. But on Wednesday it was a risk worth taking.

"To Sachin Tendulkar, on whom more words have been written than any other cricketer, including Sir Donald Bradman, twowordswillsuffice: Thankyou."

The pavilion at the Roop Singh Stadium in Gwalior where Tendulkar achieved the feat will be named after him, the Press Trust of India reported.

The chief minister of Madhya Pradesh state, where Gwalior is located, also announced that one of the main roads in the town will be named after Tendulkar, PTI said.

Ashraful.

should be there.

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**ACROSS** 

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on 28th of February at the Shere-Bangla National Stadium in **SCORE IN BRIEF** 

Bangladesh will take on

England in the first one-dayer

BCB XI: 151 for 8 in 37 overs (Babu 43 not out, Haider 35, Nafees 8, Siddiqui 7, Aftab 12, Rokibul 14, Mashrafe 0; Sidebottom 2-35, Tredwell 2-17, Bresnan 2-32) ENGLAND: 155 for 2 in 25.2

overs (Cook 42 retired, Prior 64 not out, Wright 20 not out; Babu 1-30, Mamhudul 1-41) Result: England won by 8 wickets.

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Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF FIXING THINGS UP MAKES YOU EXTREMELY NERVOUS, YOU

LIKELY ARE HAVING REPARATION ANXIETY. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: S equals G